

**Probation Committee  
Judicial Conference of Indiana**

March 8, 2002  
Minutes

The Probation Committee of the Judicial Conference of Indiana met at the Indiana Judicial Center on Friday, March 8, 2002 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

1. Members present. The following members of the committee were present: Diana LaViolette, Mary Harper, Wayne Steele, Douglas R. Bridges, Thomas Gray, Jesse Villalpando, and John Surbeck, Chair.
2. Staff present. Jane Seigel, Jenny Bauer, Bob Champion and Michelle Goodman provided the committee with staff assistance.
3. Minutes approved. The committee approved the minutes from the January 11, 2002 meeting.
4. Probation officer exam procedures. Bob Champion informed the committee that the Judicial Center had received a complaint from a probation officer who recently took the probation officer examination. Mr. Champion explained that the exam is 2 hours long, and exam-takers are not allowed to leave the exam room once the test begins. An announcement is made before the test begins that bathroom breaks are not allowed, and that anyone leaving the room before finishing the exam will not be allowed back into the room. The complaining probation officer needed to use the bathroom during the test, and says that he was uncomfortable and distracted during the exam because he was not allowed to leave the room for a bathroom break. The committee requested that the Judicial Center inform future exam-takers that they will not be allowed to leave the exam room before finishing the exam and that anyone needing ADA accommodations must inform the Center prior to the exam.
5. Probation officer certification. Bob Champion informed that committee that Hancock County recently called the Judicial Center regarding a newly hired probation officer. The probation officer began her employment with the Marion County Probation Department in May 2001, but was demoted because she did not take the probation officer exam within 6 months of her employment. When she took the job in Hancock County, she told the probation department that she was a certified drug/alcohol probation officer. She signed up to take the exam in March 2002, but she did not show up for the exam. She now wants to take the April exam and attend the March orientation for new probation officers. The committee reviewed and discussed the qualifications for becoming a probation officer. The committee decided that because she sent in her application in January 2002, she

could take the exam any time this year. If she passes the exam, she must attend the orientation within one year of being employed as a probation officer.

6. Continuing education report. Bob Champion reported that all 154 probation departments reported that their probation officers met the 12-hour requirement for continuing education in 2001.
7. Salaries. The committee reviewed the minimum salary schedule and had a lengthy discussion concerning probation officer salaries. Jane Seigel reported that she was invited to the Chief Probation Officers meeting recently and the topic of salaries was discussed at length. The majority of chief probation officers stated that they are upset because the minimum salary schedule had not been changed since 1997. Ms. Seigel pointed out that in reality, the schedule changes every year if departments follow the schedule's instructions. She suggested having one schedule for all counties to follow and then adjusting it based on yearly state increases. The committee also discussed longevity as it relates to the salary schedule. They agreed that the goal should be to encourage probation officers to stay in the profession and discussed the possibility of lump sum increases at 10, 15 and 20 years. The committee would have to study the fiscal impact of any lump sum increases for longevity. The committee also agreed that the value of probation should be marketed to the legislature in terms of cost savings to DOC and the number of probation hours supervised by probation departments.
8. Interstate Compact. Jane Seigel distributed a list of comments drafted by the Probation Officers Advisory Board regarding the Interstate Compact. She asked the committee to submit any additional comments to her by April 15<sup>th</sup>.
9. Next meeting. The next meeting of the Probation Committee is scheduled for May 10, 2002 at 1 p.m. at the Indiana Judicial Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer A. Bauer  
Staff Attorney